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Sensitive Senate issue

Closer check on CIA urged

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Washington

A little war against the CIA "invisible government" is under way here. But recruits are hard to find. And well-informed observers doubt any new clampdown on the top-secret intelligence agency.

Invisible government is a popular term for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The recent book of that title purported to tell the inside story of that highly secret organization which spends hundreds of millions of dollars every year in information gathering, espionage, counterespionage, and ordinary spying.

Two senators have proposed radically increased congressional surveillance of these operations. Most observers here feel the new proposals will end up the way similar proposals have for the last 15 years—swept into the legislative dustbin.

By far the broader of the two present proposals is that of Sen. Stephen M. Young (D) of Ohio. That of Senator Eugene J. McCarthy (D) of Minnesota is more cautious.

Small army charged

Senator Young has called for a "joint committee of Congress to act as watchdog and to direct and supervise the operations and expenditures of this sprawling bureaucracy."

In presenting his bill, Senator Young charged that the CIA has become "an invisible government, answerable only to itself."

In his remarks on the Senate floor, he cited alleged CIA blunders in the U-2 flights and in the Bay of Pigs fiasco.

Later, he charged to this reporter that during a recent visit to Vietnam, he found that in his assessment, the CIA was "employing a small army" in that country. Also, he asserted that CIA "employed a large number of South Vietnamese to pose as Viet Cong to infiltrate the enemy." What he objects to most was that, in his judgment, "some natives who had been hired didn't like two village chiefs who were loyal to the South Vietnamese Government." He contended these CIA-sponsored soldiers murdered them — and "committed other atrocities."

His catalogue of charges added up to the broad statement that "wrapped in its cloak of secrecy, the CIA has, in effect been making foreign policy."

Sen. Leverett Saltonstall (R) of Massachusetts denies that CIA makes policy. He argues that the CIA merely provides information which serves as the basis for decisions by the National Security Council and the military.

Full study asked

He points out also that all secret CIA activities are undertaken on instructions from "higher authority."

Senator Saltonstall is a member of a joint committee to oversee the CIA activities.

This committee is opposed to any congressional watchdog efforts. Among the staunchest opponents are Sens. Richard B. Russell (D) of Georgia, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and Carl Hayden (D) of Arizona.

But, at this stage, it is far from certain that Senator Young's own Armed Services Committee will vote out the legislation.

The other voice calling for CIA surveillance has a more moderate proposal.

Senator McCarthy has called for "a full and complete study with respect to the effects of the operations and activities of the CIA on the foreign relations of the United States."

His approach is cautious.

"I'm not as interested in exposing what has happened—of greater concern is to explore CIA influence in determining foreign policy," he told this reporter.

Action in doubt

Senator McCarthy supports Senator Young's proposal, but he agrees with most observers who feel it has little chance. "We are a long way from that," he said, referring to the Young proposal. (Senator Young says

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